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**INL internship program named among nation's best for second straight year**

IDAHO FALLS — Pay, job offers, housing allowances, meaningful work.

Idaho National Laboratory scored high enough in those areas and others to make a national company's ranking of top internship programs in the United States. This is the second consecutive year INL's internship program has been selected by Vault to appear in its annual guide.

"The internships we profile in the annual Vault Guide to Top Internships are chosen based on the quality of their program," said Carolyn Wise, a Vault senior editor. "We consider a number of different factors including: training, career preparation, mentoring and access to full-time professionals. No company or organization is included in the guide without proving the high caliber of their internship program."

Melinda Hamilton, INL Education Programs director, said being included in the 2011 Vault publication is an honor for the lab. INL was evaluated on the same criteria as private companies like Google and GE.

"We are thrilled to have been selected again," Hamilton said. "We have worked hard to ensure that students who intern at INL get the hands-on, real-world experience they need to succeed in their careers. We want them to get a sense of the work and research we do here."

Vault evaluates internship programs based on what they pay interns, perks like housing and transportation allowances, the type of work interns do (the more engaging and hands-on the better), job offers to interns, and something it calls "resumé radiance" — an employer that impresses people and helps a student get ahead.

In addition, the company also surveys past interns about their experiences. The employers featured each year cannot "buy" their way onto the Vault guide.

"We provide them information about our program and the Vault editors decide whether we meet their criteria," Hamilton said.

INL employs approximately 250 interns each year. The lab has worked hard to bolster its internship program and provide rewarding experiences for its students, Hamilton said.

"Having a strong program benefits both the lab and students," she said. "Students from across the country get the opportunity to learn more about INL and what it is like to work here, which is an important recruiting tool for us. And for students, internships are the only way they get real experience."

INL is one of the DOE's 10 multiprogram national laboratories. The laboratory performs work in each of DOE's strategic goal areas: energy, national security, science and environment. INL is the nation's leading center for nuclear energy research and development. Day-to-day management and operation of the laboratory is the responsibility of Battelle Energy Alliance.

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